

Scenario:

You have been chosen to participate in an international internship for the Caribbean Tourism Industry Association (CTIA), a membership-based, not-for-profit organization. The CTIA's members are large and small businesses in the Caribbean who participate in the tourism industry. Specifically, the CTIA supports Caribbean nations who were former British colonies (e.g. Jamaica, Bahamas, Belize, etc.). The CTIA assists its members by hosting monthly meetings, holding workshops for professional development, developing opportunities for members to collaborate, and advocating for its members during policy shifts. Its main goal is to unite businesses to work together to promote tourism and give visitors an authentic Caribbean experience. Previously, the CTIA was focused on supporting collaboration mainly between Caribbean-based organizations, but now that US-based companies play a larger role in the industry, there are new communication and collaboration issues the CTIA hasn't had to address before now that the CTIA represents both Caribbean-based and US-based companies. Your internship project is to come up with new strategies to address these new concerns.

The CTIA is advantageous for both Caribbean- and US-based companies, as it provides a simple way for businesses to communicate and collaborate, which is essential for both parties. US-based companies provide the infrastructure and services necessary to attract tourists who are customers of many Caribbean-based companies. These US-based companies often rely on Caribbean-based companies to outsource their secondary business offerings, as they better provide tourists with authentic Caribbean experiences and products. For example, companies will work together to set up local tour offerings through US-based resorts or items made by local artisans in gift shops. The CTIA provides a common meeting ground for both parties and enables them to better develop strategies to improve the overall business environment.

During your internship, your supervisor, Philip Simon, tasked you with doing some research to **provide him with two recommendations to address how the CTIA can help alleviate these problems**. He will review and determine whether to present these to the CTIA board at their next meeting. The recommendations should address how the CTIA can improve collaboration and communication between US and Caribbean based companies. Not only must you give two recommendations, but you must provide action statements on how to best implement these recommendations. Because the CTIA is headquartered in the Bahamas, an English-speaking country, **a language barrier is not a factor in the cultural divide**.

When conducting research and creating recommendations, it may be helpful to consider the following questions below. **Note that you do not need to address every question in your memo**; instead, use these questions to guide your research and thinking:

- What differences between Caribbean and US culture would cause disconnects and breakdowns in business and communication?

- How can the CTIA address the concerns behind the claims each group is making? Assuming that both groups' claims are equally valid, how can the CTIA showcase the validity behind their claims while also keeping both member groups content? Keep in mind that the CTIA is funded primarily through membership dues.
- What strengths and weaknesses do each group have when approaching tourism initiatives? How can the CTIA leverage these strengths and support companies to offset the weaknesses?
- What role do membership-based organizations have in the greater business environment, specifically in underdeveloped areas? How can they improve collaboration between members to help promote tourism in the area as a whole?
- How does tourism in the Caribbean differ from tourism in the United States that may affect business practices?
- What are some examples used in other companies when addressing similar communication breakdowns due to cultural differences?

Additional Useful Context:

Pre-pandemic, tourism numbers in the Caribbean were steadily rising, with a total of over 23 million visitors in 2019. During the pandemic, these numbers drastically dropped, with only 7 million visitors in the Caribbean. This caused many small Caribbean-based companies operating in the tourism industry to go out of business. In 2021 and 2022, tourism numbers began to exponentially rise, rising to 13 million and 20.8 million respectively. Because of this 59% increase in tourism and the decrease in number of local businesses due to the pandemic, United States (US) based companies began establishing themselves in the region.

In the January 2026 meeting, a heated debate broke out between these two groups. Caribbean-based companies are unhappy because many of them do not have the financial capital necessary to adequately compete with companies based in the US, specifically in the resort and hotel industry. These Caribbean-based companies feel that some of the large, better funded US companies have diluted the cultural experience the Caribbean has to offer its visitors, as some have stopped outsourcing tours and other cultural outings to local businesses. Furthermore, they do not feel as if the US-based companies try to adapt to cultural differences while in CTIA meetings and during general business interactions, causing there to be a divide between members. Longtime CTIA members also miss the camaraderie, conversation, and the consensus-seeking style of group decision-making of previous meetings.

However, US-based companies argue that its US-based and funded hotels, resorts, properties, restaurants, and related businesses have caused a further increase in tourist numbers, aiding the overall business environment. Furthermore, its establishments have led to an increase in employment for Caribbean-born citizens, supported by unemployment levels dropping 2% from

pre-pandemic to post-pandemic. US-based companies respond to comments about division stating that Caribbean-based companies are unreliable during partnerships, as there have been multiple instances of tour guides being late to pick up customers, site visits to local artisans not going well, or an inability to always meet gift shops' demand for items during peak season. While US-companies' international tourist numbers are strong, they have noticed domestic tourist numbers remain low, which is a problem because they rely on domestic and regional tourists during off-peak months. They believe this is due to the lack of support and a general feeling of not being welcomed by the local community. US-based firms also resent that Caribbean-based company representatives often do not meet their standards of professionalism during meetings, namely, arriving late, not following the agenda, and speaking off topic, and related concerns.

Please remember that your role is to assume both groups' concerns are equally valid rather than just pick a side. Picking a side will likely not provide any lasting solutions for the CTIA or its members.

Task: Compose a **one-page, single-spaced memo** with 1" margins that addresses your internship supervisor, Philip Simon, suggesting **two recommendations** the CTIA can follow to alleviate their collaboration issues. Your recommendations should be heavily researched (see "Research" below) and presented in **paragraph form**. Make sure to communicate *how* your recommendations address the organization's problems.

Note: you will need to cite **4 different sources from the provided resource list in APA** on your references page. (You may use additional outside sources). Your references page will not count towards the 1-page requirement. When citing sources, use parenthetical citations (see *Publication Manual of APA* 6.11-21), not footnotes. The readings cited below are all in APA format but remove the hyperlinks/URL when you cite.

Readings that will help you form your recommendations can be found on [our website](#).